

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed December 21, 2006. The Examiner is thanked for the thorough examination of the present application. Furthermore, Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating on page 5 of the Office Action that claims 22-25 are allowed and that claim 27 *"would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims."* Applicant has thus canceled claims 26, 28-29, and 32-44 without prejudice, waiver, or disclaimer and have incorporated the limitations of claim 26 into claim 27, as indicated above. Applicant has also made claims 30 and 31 dependent from currently amended claim 27 (instead of claim 26). Claims 30 and 31 are allowable by virtue of their dependence on claim 27, which, as stated above, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of base claim 26.

Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application is hereby courteously requested. Applicant reserves the right to present these canceled claims, or variants thereof, in continuing applications to be filed subsequently. No fee is believed to be due in connection with this amendment and response to Office Action. If, however, any fee is believed to be due, you are hereby authorized to charge any such fee to deposit account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,

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